

01-56-PS90-62

NR 12-14-78

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Union Station

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

East Fourth Ave. and State Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Pine Bluff

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Fourth

STATE

Arkansas

VICINITY OF

CODE

05

COUNTY

Jefferson

CODE

069

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- MUSEUM
- COMMERCIAL
- PARK
- EDUCATIONAL
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ENTERTAINMENT
- RELIGIOUS
- GOVERNMENT
- SCIENTIFIC
- INDUSTRIAL
- TRANSPORTATION
- MILITARY
- OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

City of Pine Bluff

STREET & NUMBER

Civic Center, East 8th Ave.

CITY, TOWN

Pine Bluff

VICINITY OF

STATE

Arkansas

11601

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Jefferson County Circuit Clerks Office

STREET & NUMBER

1800 East Harding Ave.

CITY, TOWN

Pine Bluff

STATE

Arkansas

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Union Station in Pine Bluff is a single story brick structure with hipped roof. On the south, facing the railroad is a shed porch running the length of the building. The roof structure is supported by iron columns and half trusses. A bay, centered on this elevation, extends out on the porch. Flooring is herringbone brick. Windows and doors are transomed and framed in brick arches with pronounced stone voussoirs. These arches spring from a stone impost line which encircles the building. A second band of stone belts the building at the sill line.

The interior of the structure is little altered. Floors are ceramic tile.

# SIGNIFICANCE

Y00	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
__ HISTORIC	__ ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__ COMMUNITY PLANNING	__ LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__ RELIGION
__ 1400-1499	__ ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__ CONSERVATION	__ LAW	__ SCIENCE
__ 1500-1599	X AGRICULTURE	__ ECONOMICS	__ LITERATURE	__ SCULPTURE
__ 1600-1699	__ ARCHITECTURE	__ EDUCATION	__ MILITARY	__ SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
__ 1700-1799	__ ART	__ ENGINEERING	__ MUSIC	__ THEATER
X 1800-1899	X COMMERCE	__ EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__ PHILOSOPHY	X TRANSPORTATION
__ 1900-	__ COMMUNICATIONS	__ INDUSTRY	__ POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__ OTHER (SPECIFY)
		__ INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES      May 23, 1906      BUILDER/ARCHITECT      E.H. Steininger of St. Louis, MO.

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The old Union Station at East Fourth Avenue and State Streets in Pine Bluff was the result of a running fight between the city and the railroads for a period of 26 years. It is also a part of the railroad history of southeast Arkansas. The first railroad into Pine Bluff was the Little Rock, Pine Bluff and New Orleans Railroad which reached the city in December, 1873.<sup>1</sup> The L.R., P.B. and N.O. was consolidated with the Mississippi, Ouachita and Red River Railroad and renamed the s, Mississippi River and North-Western Railroad. In 1875 this line was sold to a group of New England capitalists and renamed the Little Rock, Mississippi River and Texas Railway.<sup>2</sup>

The first depot built by the railroad was a small frame building located in the vicinity of State and East Fourth Avenue. Due to financial difficulties the construction of line was stopped when it reached Pine Bluff although the original plans were to build it into Little Rock. The purpose was to offer service from Little Rock to a point on the Mississippi River (first, to Chicot Point and later to Arkansas City). Thus, the problems with low water on the Arkansas River which frequently interrupted steamboat traffic would be eliminated.

In December, 1879, Colonel Zeb Ward of Little Rock was given a contract to grade a road bed between Pine Bluff and Little Rock.<sup>3</sup> A controversy arose in the community over the extension of the railroad west on Fourth Avenue to Little Rock. .umber of property owners objected to the use of the street as a right-of-way

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for the line. After wrangling for three months an ordinance was passed on March 23, 1880, granting the right-of-way and specifying that the railroad build an adequate depot on the northeast corner of South Common (now East Fourth Avenue) and Fugate (State) Street.<sup>4</sup> Apparently the depot the L.R., M.R. and T. constructed was a cheap frame building which soon became an eyesore. The Cotton Belt Railroad had constructed a similiar building on the southeast corner of Alabama and East Third Avenue. The L. R., M.R. & T. was purchased by the Jay Gould interests and became a part of the St. Louis, Iron Mountain and Southern Railway Company.

As early as 1891 the Pine Bluff community leaders were interested in building a union depot for the Cotton Belt and Iron Mountain passenger trains. When W.B. Doddridge, Cotton Belt general manager, conferred with Superintendent Harry Flanders of the Iron Mountain in Pine Bluff in July, 1891, the Pine Bluff Commercial carried a headline reading, "Was it a Union Depot?"<sup>5</sup> It was not.

In 1902 the Iron Mountain began serious negotiations for property on which to build a depot. The company wanted all of South Common for the depot, but this street (about 126 feet wide) had been deeded to the city with the stipulation it would be used for a city hall, a civic institution or park, or the land would revert back to the (James and Yell) heirs. If South Common was not available, the railroad was considering a plan to divert its tracks south of the old (Harding) Lake and build a depot at Main and Lake (Tenth Avenue). The arguments for this plan were (1) relieve traffic congestion in downtown area, (2) give the city an opportunity to lay a drainage sewer system before the land was filled in and (3) result

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in new buildings being constructed on vacant property in the old lake area.<sup>6</sup>

Apparently this plan was not pursued and it was two years before the depot subject was considered again.

"Hopes of Citizens for Last 25 Years - a New Iron Mountain Depot" was a headline in the Pine Bluff Weekly Graphic on July 14, 1904. Russell Harding, general manager of the railroad, had stopped in the city the previous Saturday morning and had met with a committee from the Board of Trade (predecessor of the Chamber of Commerce).<sup>7</sup> Harding asked the city to donate South Common Street, between State

Alabama, as a site for a new passenger station. Mayor H. King White suggested that the new depot be a union station and offered to discuss the matter with the Cotton Belt Railroad.<sup>8</sup>

Apparently the railroad did not take any action on the matter and the condition of the old station worsened. A fire broke out at the depot March 26, 1905, and the Graphic said the fire department brought "condemnation and execration on itself by saving the old Valley depot." One of the problems was the railroad stored cotton on the platform designated for use by passengers in violation of its agreement with the city. Sparks from a passing train ignited the cotton. "This is the second time in the past few days that a blaze has broken out at the old 'shack'," the Graphic said.<sup>9</sup>

The Iron Mountain's lease on the depot property had expired in March, 1905, and Harding had requested the railroad's architect draw up plans and specifications for a depot building, but the company did not ask the city council for a new lease.

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The council discussed the matter at several meetings in the spring of 1905 and finally voted on July 3, 1905, to sue the railroad.<sup>10</sup> City Attorney W.F. Coleman filed suit against the Iron Mountain from the property and asking \$5,000 damages due to the company's failure to act in the matter.<sup>11</sup>

The city's suit had its desired effect on the railroad when Superintendent W.T. Tyler informed the City Council he would be in Pine Bluff on July 11, 1905, to meet with the board. At the meeting the Council and Tyler went over the plans and specifications for a new depot.<sup>12</sup> Tyler met with the Council again on July 13, 1905, and the plans were "practically accepted," the Graphic said. The railroad asked for double tracks on Fourth Avenue and agreed to furnish stone to pave the street if the city would put it down. The Iron Mountain proposed to build a station 35 feet wide and 240 feet long using "stock" brick and Bedford sandstone trim. The building was to have a slate roof, concrete floor and steam heat. The exterior walls were to be of "No. 5 best St. Louis brick of the Hydraulic Brick Company's make." The company also proposed to build a freight depot facing Fourth Avenue between Texas and Georgia Streets, 40 feet by 212 feet, two stories high with upstairs offices for railway officials. Tyler said further the Cotton Belt had agreed to use the Station.<sup>13</sup>

On July 17, 1905, the City Council instructed the city attorney to draw a contract for the depot which specified the Iron Mountain was to receive a 50-year lease on South Common in exchange for building the new station.<sup>14</sup> The depot ordinance was passed by the council on July 31, 1905.<sup>15</sup>

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To protect the city's interest in the new station, the Council employed the architectural firm of Gibbs and Sanders of Little Rock as consultants on the plans for the new depot. <sup>16</sup> Gibbs attended the Council meeting of August 16, 1905, to discuss the plans, but said he had not received any plans or specifications from the railroad. Apparently the plans were received the next day as the Graphic reported on August 18, 1905, that Gibbs did not approve of the plans as they were drawn. He made several suggestions for revising them which were forwarded to the Iron Mountain. <sup>17</sup> At a conference in St. Louis on September 11, with the representatives of the City of Pine Bluff, the Iron Mountain and the Cotton Belt in attendance the Cotton Belt agreed to use the new depot. <sup>18</sup>

The Iron Mountain delayed construction when the company asked a 30-day extension before beginning construction. The City Council, the Iron Mountain and the Cotton Belt signed an agreement to build the station on October 30, 1905. Architect Bibbs was asked by the Council to draw plans for a shed 239 feet long extend almost to Main Street to protect the passengers from the rain and sun. <sup>19</sup> E.H. Steininger, a railroad contractor of St. Louis, was awarded the contract to build the Union Station on November 30, 1905. <sup>20</sup>

Construction on the station moved slowly, but was something of a community attraction. The Weekly Graphic of January 31, 1906, said: "hundreds of spectators were attracted to the site of the new depot." By Saturday, January 27, 1906, the enameled brick wainscoting (on the interior of the building had been completed. The Graphic said "mottled" brick would be used for the construction of the remainder of the walls and that the building would be ready for occupancy in two months. <sup>21</sup>

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The features of the new station were described as: (1) a big car shed running from Main Street 540 feet east to protect passengers from sun and heat and (2) a feature ordered in to the contract by Mayor H. King White and the City Council consisting of a smoking room "set apart for gentlemen."<sup>22</sup>

The Weekly Graphic quoted Mayor White as saying for forty years he had been forced to go outside of waiting rooms to smoke. The Graphic said further that the brick work was proceeding with the upper walls of lighter colored bricks than the lower walls. Foundations for the freight house was practically finished and paving of East Fourth Avenue "Progressing nicely." Spectators continued to "constantly throng the scene of operations."<sup>23</sup>

The construction of the depot moved slowly during the spring of 1906 and Frank Thieleckle, Superintendent of construction for the Steininger firm, said the station would probably be ready on May 7.<sup>24</sup> Iron Mountain Passenger Agent Atwood finally received authorization from the railroad's headquarters to move into the station on May 23, 1906, and trains began stopping there the next day.<sup>25</sup> The Cotton Belt did not begin using the station for several weeks as the track connecting the two lines was incomplete.

The Union Depot reverted to Pine Bluff when the Missouri Pacific's franchise with the city expired July 31, 1955.<sup>26</sup> The railroad continued to use an office in the building for several years as headquarters for the division's freight agent. The Railway Express maintained its facility in the depot until the company went out of business.

In recent years the building has been used by government agencies and last year a farmers' market was opened under the old passenger shed. The city is now attempting





ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM

Suite 500, Continental Building - Markham and Main - Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

May 18, 1978

MAY 19 1978

Phone: (501) 371-2763

City of Pine Bluff  
c/o Mayor Charles Moore  
Civic Center  
200 East 8th Avenue  
Pine Bluff, AR 71601

Re: Union Station, Jefferson County

Dear Mayor Moore:

The staff of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program is preparing a National Register nomination for the above captioned property which will be presented to the Arkansas State Review Committee at their June meeting. If approved, the nomination will be submitted to the National Register office in Washington for final consideration.

The National Register of Historic Places is a listing of historic sites, buildings, objects and districts from all across the country that are worthy of preservation. Entry in the National Register is an honor which places an obligation on a private owner. It does, however, provide protection through comment by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation from federally financed, assisted or licensed projects that might affect a National Register property.

On October 4, 1976, the President signed a Tax Reform Act of which Section 2124 refers to tax incentives for historic properties. Enclosed you will find an information sheet on that tax act.

If you have any questions concerning the program or this property's nomination, please contact Sandra Taylor Smith of our staff.

Enclosed are two copies of this letter. Please complete the form below, sign and return the original to our office. The copy is for your files. We would appreciate receiving any comments you might have concerning the nomination of this property. If we do not hear from you within 30 days your approval will be assumed.

Sincerely,

*Barbara Woodard*

Barbara Woodard, Deputy Director  
Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

I approve of the nomination of the above property to the National Register of Historic Places.  Yes  No

Comments:

5-19-78  
Date

*Charles E. Moore*  
Signature



# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See continuation sheet

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	B	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Northeast Corner East Fourth Avenue and State Street. Lots 3 & 4 Block 41, Old Town Pine Bluff

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Jim Leslie, Historian

ORGANIZATION

608 North 20th

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

Pine Bluff, Arkansas

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

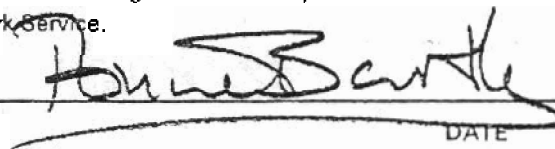
NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE



TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER.

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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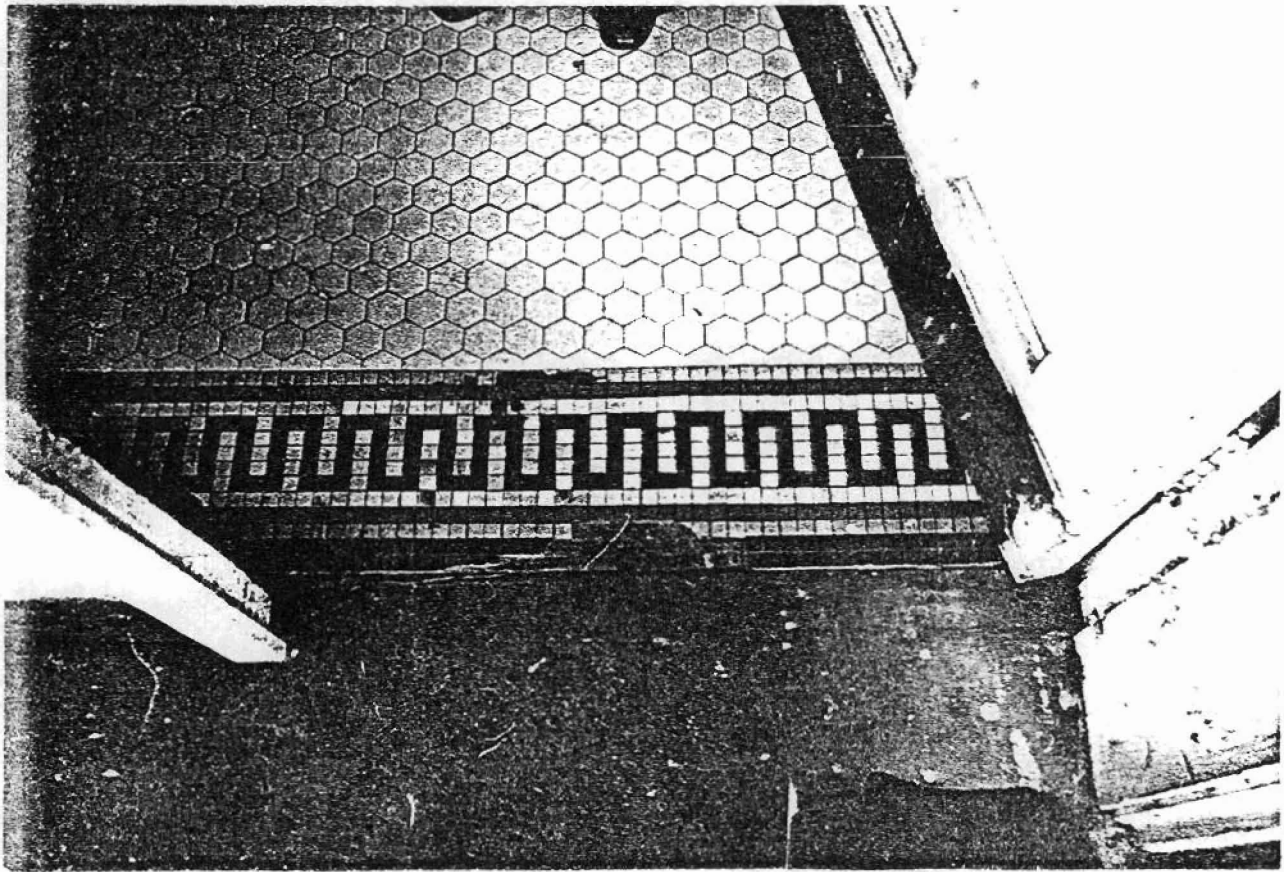
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to develop plans which will assure the preservation of the structure for future generations.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 Pine Bluff Weekly Press, January 15, 1874, p.1.
- 2 Press, December 25, 1879, p. 1.
- 3 Press, December 18, 1879, l.1.
- 4 Pine Bluff City Council Minutes, March 23, 1880, pp. 181-182 .
- 5 Pine Bluff Weekly Commercial, July 19, 1891, p.3.
- 6 Weekly Commercial, April 12, 1902, p. 5.
- 7 Pine Bluff Weekly Graphic, July 16, 1904, p. 6.
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 Pine Bluff Daily Graphic, March 27, 1905, p. 1.
- 10 Graphic, July 6, 1905, p. 1.
- 11 Ibid.
- 12 Graphic, July 11, 1905, p.1.
- 13 Graphic, July 14, 1905, p. 1.
- 14 Graphic, July 18, 1905, p. 1.
- 15 Graphic, August 1, 1905, p. 1.
- 16 Graphic, August 8, 1905, p. 1.
- 17 Graphic, August 17, 1905, p. 1.
- 18 Graphic, September 13, 1905, p. 1.
- 19 Graphic, October 3, 1905, p. 1.
- 20 Graphic, November, 2, 1905, p. 1.
- 21 Graphic, December 1, 1905, p. 1.
- 22 Weekly Graphic, February 3, 1906, p. 1.
- 23 Ibid.
- 24 Graphic, April 28, 1906, p. 1.
- 25 Graphic, May 24, 1906, p. 1.
- 26 Commercial, August 13, 1955, p. 1.



# PINE BLUFF QUADRANGLE

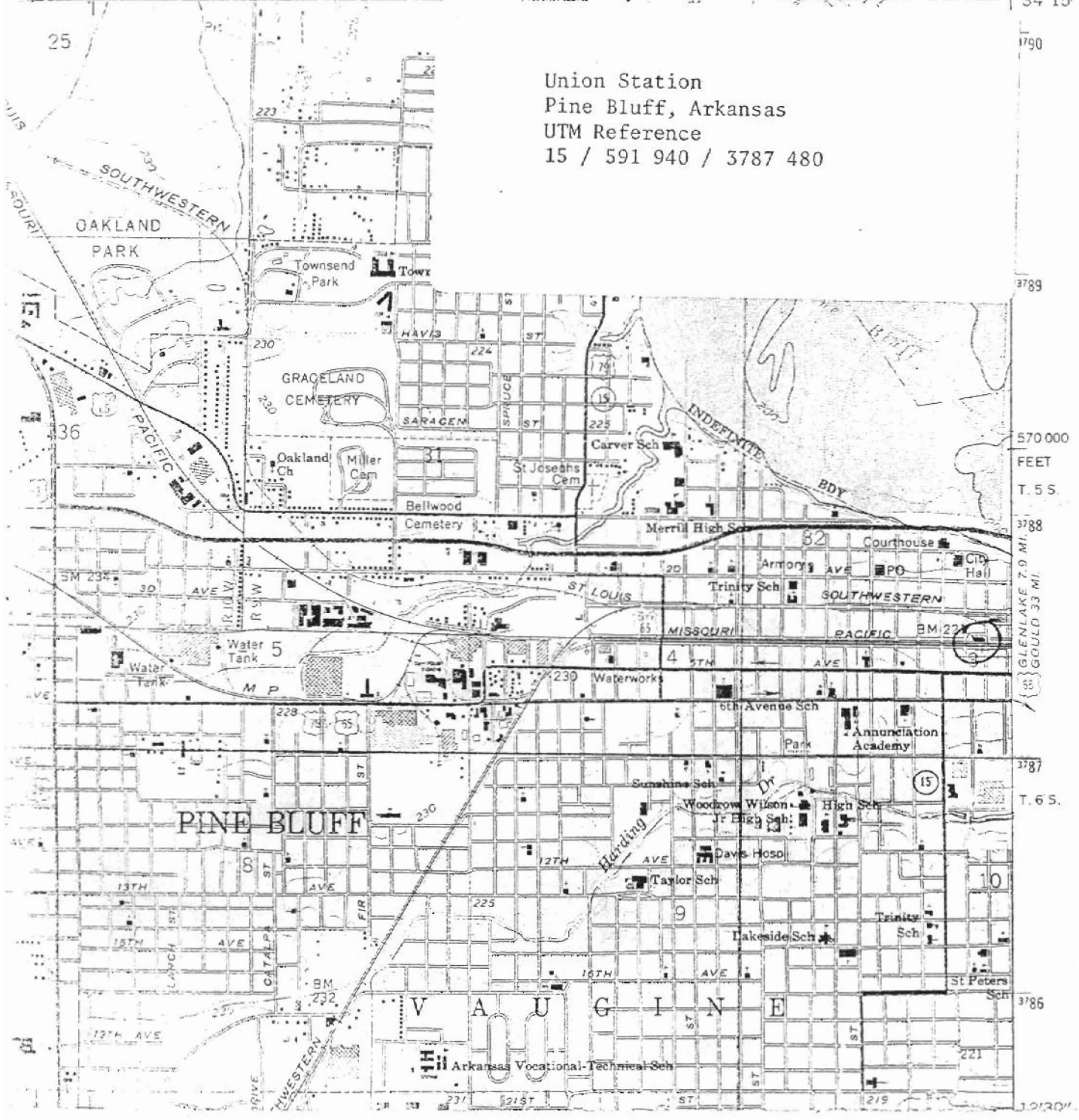
ARKANSAS—JEFFERSON CO.

7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

7652 IV SW  
(ROB ROY)

W. 2'30" 89 1990000 FEET R. 9 W. 90 15 79 STUTTGART 35 MI. 92°00' 34°15'

Union Station  
Pine Bluff, Arkansas  
UTM Reference  
15 / 591 940 / 3787 480



570000  
FEET  
T. 5 S.  
3788  
7.9 MI.  
GLENLAKE  
33 MI.  
3787  
T. 6 S.  
3786